

HSLD

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Perfin Patterns

A Detailed Study

By
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“HSLD” PERFIN PATTERNS - A DETAILED STUDY (David Coath)

Firstly, let me say that this is the greatest challenge I have faced in my perfin collecting. Several of these patterns are very similar to each other, and to sort them I have had to take tracings of each one and then compare the next stamp to that tracing. In this process, I frequently had to re-check piles that I had sorted and confirm that they were different to the new tracings that I had just made. Once I had sorted them, I then randomly cross-matched stamps from one pile against the tracing of another pile to ensure that all the piles I had were indeed different. Only once I had the distinct piles of a pattern did I look at the postmarks to confirm that they were from the same usage location. While on this point, the usage stretches all across Australia and right up the coast of Queensland. It is unlikely that they had central machines and issued stamps out to dispersed areas, and this is generally supported by the postmark evidence, but there are exceptions. In all I have sorted about 500 HSLDs to the following conclusions.

There are 5 distinct layouts for the HSLDs

HSLD.1, .2, .10, .11, .12, and .13 - The 'D' starts between the last 2 holes in the foot of the 'L'.

HSLD.3 - The 'D' starts after the end of the 'L'.

HSLD.4 - Is taller and easy to spot.

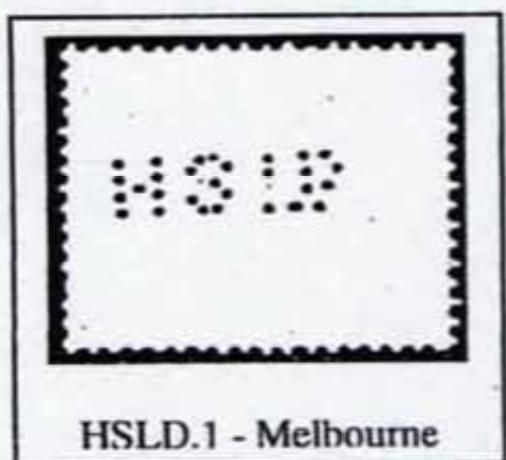
HSLD.5, .6, .8, and .9 - The 'D' starts over the last hole of the 'L'.

HSLD.7 - Has a distinctive S with 3 holes across the top in lieu of the 4 holes in most of the others.

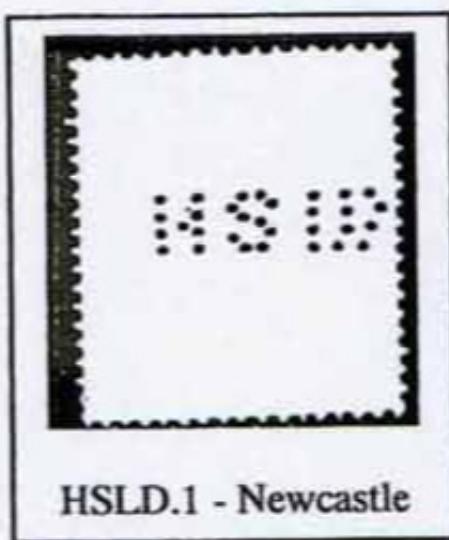
Layout 1 – HSLD.1, HSLD.2, HSLD.10, HSLD.11, HSLD.12 and HSLD.13

These patterns are all very close to each other, even more than normal for this user, and in sorting them out I have looked to find the subtle variations in the positioning of the various letters and at times merely the locations of holes within a letter in order to get the different patterns. Having found that some identical patterns were used in remote locations I have revisited the sorting of each of these patterns with the usage location in mind and in most cases found consistent variations that indicate a different, albeit near identical, machine. In this instance I have referred to them as types.

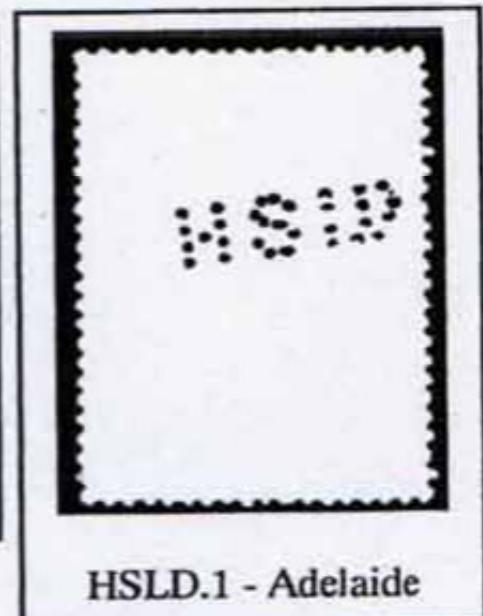
HSLD.1. To me the distinguishing feature of HSLD.1 is the slight bow in the back of the 'D'. There are separate types that are from machines in Melbourne (1920-1931), Newcastle (1927-1947), Adelaide (1916-1950) and Mackay (1934-1951). The Mackay type is easy to see and the Adelaide type has distinct spacing in the middle of the leg of the 'L' that would almost make it a separate pattern. But the Melbourne and Newcastle types (if they are different types at all) are so close that they can only be reliably distinguished by the postmarks. I cannot find evidence to support any Cairns use.



HSLD.1 - Melbourne



HSLD.1 - Newcastle



HSLD.1 - Adelaide



HSLD.1 - Mackay

HSLD.2. This is the Fremantle machine but the pattern in the Handbook is not quite right. There is no Newcastle use that I can find for any pattern that matches the pattern that carries the Fremantle postmark. The only date I have is 1926.



HSLD.2

HSLD.10. This pattern is consistent but usage is shown from Melbourne, and Newcastle as well as Sydney. Melbourne usage is 1923 – 1924, Newcastle from 1916 – 1923, and Sydney from 1917 - 1921. Perhaps these and the HSLD.1 "types" will show a machine on the move rather than 3 machines.



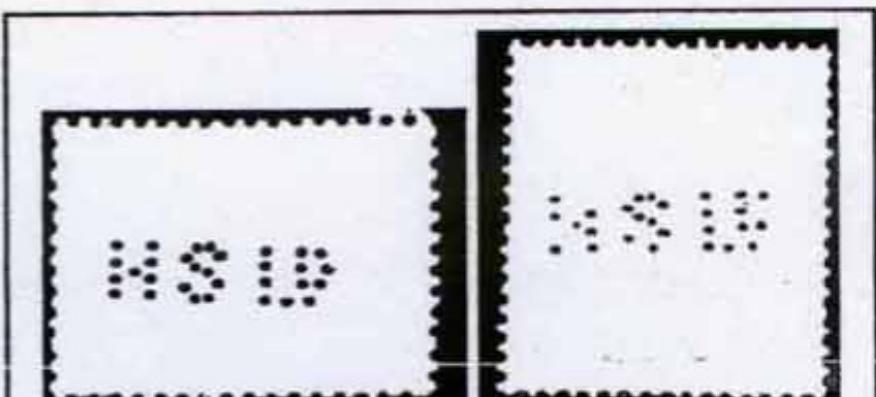
HSLD.10

HSLD.11. This machine is certainly located in Innisfail, and interestingly almost all the duty stamps that I have found with HSLDs carry this pattern. I have not found any Townsville postmarks in the ones I have. I have found the early usage in 1915, but also there is a period of later use from 1941 to 1951, including on Duty Stamps.



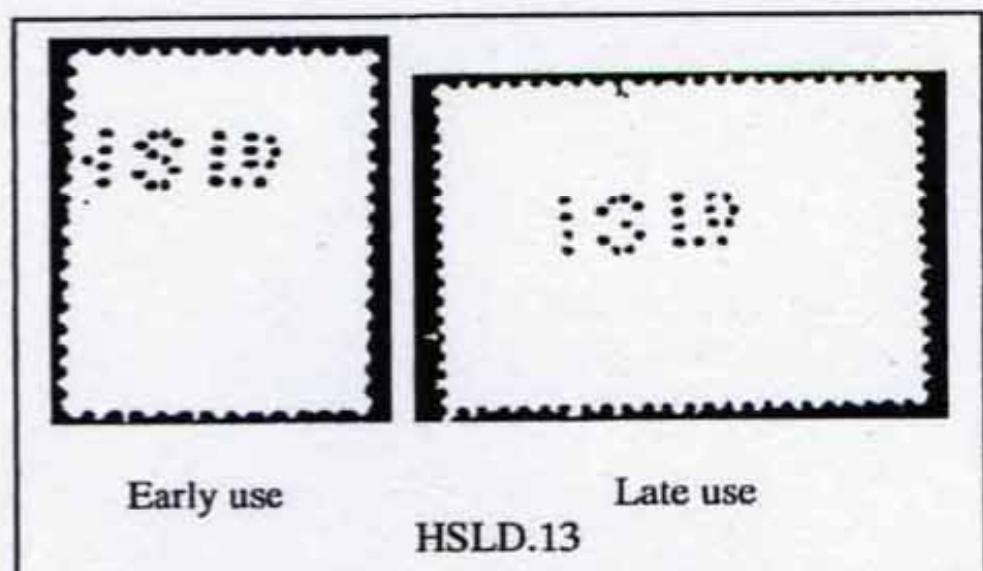
HSLD-11

HSLD.12. I have found 2 types for this pattern. From the postmarks they were used in Cairns (1932-1940) and Maryborough (1915-1940). The Maryborough type has a consistently slightly larger hole size, and a slightly narrower 'D' than the Cairns pattern. Early usage starts in 1915.



HSI.D.12 – Maryborough HSI.D.12 - Cairns

HSLD.13. This machine was used in Rockhampton and is distinguished by its partial 'H' and its small 'D'. I have some with the bottom of the 'H' intact but none with a complete 'H'. The postmarks are all Queensland TPO No. 5 N.C. (from 1915) and Rockhampton (mainly 1930s-1940).



Layout 2 – HSLD.3

HSLD.3. This pattern is unique in the HSLDs in that the 'D' follows the 'L' on the same level rather than being over the 'L'. I only have 2 of these and they are 1d red KGV stamps with Brisbane postmarks. My findings do not support the use on Queensland issues but the pattern is so easily identifiable that I have no reason to suspect that the Queensland use is not correct.



HSLD.3

Layout 3 – HSLD.4

HSLD.4. Again this is an uncharacteristically easy HSLD to identify. It is much taller than all the other patterns. Queensland postmarks are predominant, in particular Townsville and Brisbane, but I have some nice Melbourne cancels as well. There is a subtle difference that is suggested to the eye in terms of the location of the inner hole at the base of the 'H' that is different. The Queensland ones have the hole kinking in and the Melbourne ones are straight. But when you lay the patterns over each other they seem to match perfectly and they both match to fresh tracings of each other. Given the argument above regarding machine hole locations giving types then you could present a case for a Melbourne type but it is not strong. Melbourne usage is from 1915 to early 1920s. Townsville use is from the 1920s to 1946. This suggests a possible 2-head device initially located in Melbourne, and later sent to Townsville.



HSLD.4 - Melbourne



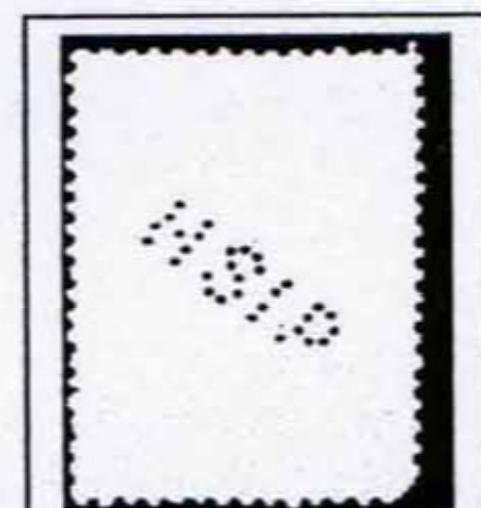
HSLD.4 - Townsville

Layout 4- HSLD.5, HSLD.6, HSLD.8 and HSLD.9

Again these patterns are very similar. In particular, HSLD.5 and HSLD.6 are very close to each other (both 7 hole 'D'), and HSLD.8 is likewise very close to HSLD.9 (both 6 hole 'D').

HSLD.5. The HSLD.5 and HSLD.6 patterns are essentially the same except that the HSLD.5 has smaller holes and there is a bulge in the second bottom hole of the left hand leg of the 'H'.

I have found that almost all of what I had noted as HSLD.6 are best described as HSLD.5. This is certainly a Sydney machine and I can only find these postmarks. Usage was from the early 1920s (1921) until use on the KGVI definitives of 1937.



HSLD.5

HSLD.6. This pattern is essentially a HSLD.5 (without the bulge in the leg of the 'H') but has larger holes and this is why the images in both of the books show the holes running together. It is a Sydney machine (like HSLD.5) and the usage is later, starting with the first KGVI definitives and going up until the commemorative issues of the early 1950s. What's more, I can find some early ones of these that have what could be called normal-sized holes but do not have the bulge of HSLD.5. These date from 1915 to 1951 and again all have Sydney postmarks.



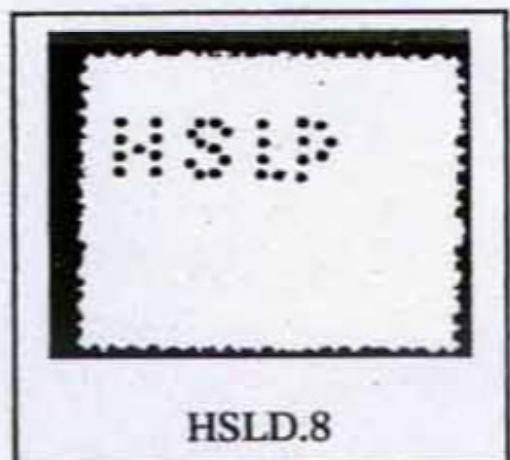
HSLD.6

Are HSLD.5 and HSLD.6 the same machine? From the postmarks, it is clear that these are Sydney machines and the usage of them does not seem to overlap. A case could be made for them to be considered as 3 manifestations of the same machine as follows:

1915 to 1920-ish	Normal sized holes with no bulge in 'H'
1921 to 1937-ish	Normal sized holes with bulge in 'H' (repair to machine or replacement of pin?) HSLD.5.
1938-ish to 1952	Larger holes with no bulge in 'H' (subsequent repair or new machine made to same pattern) HSLD.6.

Just as the case could be made for them to be considered as one pattern, you could also argue that they could be 2 or 3 patterns, 1 if you consider the position above to give 3 types; 2 as per the current Handbook but show early use of HSLD.6 or consider it to be 2 types of HSLD.5; or 3 if you call each a separate pattern.

HSLD.8. This is a Melbourne machine from all the postmark evidence and I cannot find anything that looks like any Adelaide use. The usage is interesting, going from about 1915 until the middle of the 1930s and then restarting in about 1946 – 1951.



HSLD.8

HSLD.9. All the postmarks for this pattern that I have are Port Pirie (early) or Adelaide (late). Usage is from 1917 up until 1948.



HSLD.9

Layout 5 – HSLD.7

HSLD.7. Like HSLD.3 and HSLD.4, this is a distinctive and easy to identify pattern. The postmark evidence supports a machine in Melbourne.



HSLD.7

[Note by John Mathews. David has done a great job with this survey, and I most grateful for the checking of dates, postmarks and pattern details which he has done. As far as postmarks are concerned, one must keep in mind that the company ran many ships which plied their trade around the Australian coast. It is possible that ships' captains were given stamps when they called in to a port but did not post letters until the next port. Hence, there may be some cases where a particular pattern occurs on a stamp with a postmark which does not agree with David's overall findings in this article.]